DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 369 513 PS 022 227

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TITLE Quality Child Care for Hispanic Families: Support and Training for Spanish-Speaking Family Day Care Providers. A Survey of Community-Based Organizations.
INSTITUTION Children's Foundation, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Aug 93
NOTE 11p.
AVAILABLE FROM Children's Foundation, 725 Fifteenth Street, N.W., #505, Washington, DC 20005-2109 ($4).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Bilingual Instructional Materials; Bilingual Teachers; *Community Organizations; Early Childhood Education; *Family Day Care; National Surveys; Questionnaires; *Spanish; *Teacher Education

ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted of 167 community-based organizations in 40 states that support family child-care providers. Conducted by the Children's Foundation, the survey sought to examine the need for Spanish-language training and instructional materials by family child-care organizations. Responses indicated that over 80 percent of the responding organizations offered training as well as referral services, and 38 percent sponsored family day-care networks. The vast majority of respondents reported Spanish-speaking people in their service areas; the respondents were providing, or planned to provide, assistance to this population. Major obstacles to such assistance were a lack of bilingual counselors and a lack of Spanish-language training and instructional materials. Many centers reported having to translate or adapt their own materials to Spanish-speaking audiences. Nearly 9 percent of the organizations did not have any materials translated into Spanish. The survey clearly identified the need for providing services to the growing Spanish-speaking community. (A copy of the survey form is appended.) (MDM)

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QUALITY CHILD CARE FOR HISPANIC FAMILIES: SUPPORT AND TRAINING FOR SPANISH-SPEAKING FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDERS

A Survey of Community-Based Organizations

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Quality Child Care for Hispanic Families:
Support and Training for Spanish-Speaking Family Day Care Providers

A Survey of Community Based Organizations

> There is a crying need for translated,
> cross-cultural materials in Spanish...
> - Survey Respondent

FOREWORD

Over one quarter (27.5%) of the Hispanic population in the United States lives below the poverty level. It is necessary to note that the majority of the Hispanic poor families (63.8%) have one or more family member employed either full or part-time. In addition, Hispanic married-couple families and Hispanic families with a worker are more likely to be in poverty than comparable Black or White families according to the National Council for La Raza (NCLR). **The Latinos make up the majority of the working poor.** Dependable, affordable child care, is essential for these working families and their children. Frequently, this child care is family day care, which is defined as the care of six or fewer children in the home of the caregiver for compensation.

Twenty-nine percent of Hispanic families were female-headed households in 1990 (NCLR, 93). In State of Hispanic America, NCLR said, "the single mother who is without the support of an extended family often finds that she is forced to remain unemployed in order to care for her children" due to limited quality, affordable child care.

Although under the Family Support Act (FSA) quality child care for people on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) is to be provided, a report from the Children's Defense Fund states that this is not being accomplished. FSA child care, including family day care, is typically low quality, potentially dangerous, and does not allow AFDC parents to choose the type of child care that is best for them and their child (CDF, 92).

"Hispanics have one of the lowest levels of educational attainment in the country" (Sotomayor, 91). In 1990, Hispanics had the highest high school drop out rate at 35% (US Census). It is widely accepted among early childhood specialists that quality child care can provide the necessary "good start" to help children be successful in school. With quality child care, low-income Latino children would be able to get the boost that could help carry them above the poverty level as adults.

Who is caring for America's children? The answer to this question is as diverse as the populations within our land. The Children's Foundation (CF) set out to try to answer this question with respect to family child care in the Hispanic community. A survey (Attachment A) conducted by CF in 1993, shows explicitly that there is a need for training, educational materials, and resources for family child care providers in Spanish. In reality, most providers in the Latino community are unregulated, untrained, and without support services. If we are to increase the supply of quality, affordable, dependable child care for Hispanic families and children, we must reach out to Latino family child care providers.

BACKGROUND

For many years, CF has been receiving requests to help local and state-wide organizations find family day care training materials and other resources in Spanish. Several of the groups throughout the country who use Better Baby Care: A Book for Family Day Care Providers (CF, 86) or who offer the Better Baby Care Training Course (CF, 88) began receiving requests from their Spanish-speaking population to have training and books available in Spanish. These groups began to pressure us to take a hard look at this emerging issue. In addition, during the field test phase of the development of Helping Children Love

Themselves and Others: A Professional Handbook for Family Day Care (CF, 90), we were asked repeatedly if this publication would be available in Spanish- to make translation a priority.

As the requests from organizations throughout the country grew, we began to look at the needs of the fastest growing segment of Americans, the Hispanic population (53% increase between 1980-1990). CF found that there is a great and growing demand which is not being met: family day care materials and training available in Spanish. This is important because family day care is a large portion of the out-of-home child care in the Hispanic community; it most reflects their cultural and family values.

CF has translated the well-regarded Better Baby Care: A Book for Family Day Care Providers into Spanish, Mejor Cuidado Infantil: Un Libro para Proveedoras de Cuidado para Ninos en el Hogar. In the spring 1993 field test conducted by CF of Mejor Cuidado Infantil, 75 Spanish-speaking family day care providers, center-based staff, parents and nannies throughout the country were asked to evaluate the publication and training in Spanish. The one resounding and uniform comment was that training conducted in their "first language" was more beneficial and less threatening. The participants said that they learned more and understood better how to care for infants and toddlers.

In order to find out just how wide-spread this need is, where it is, and what is being done about it, CF determined there should be a national survey of community-based organizations that support family child care. The survey was developed and sent to 750 groups across the country.

These organizations from 50 states and the District of Columbia were taken from the CF data base [National Directory of Family Day Care Associations and Support Groups (1993)]. This data base is comprised of resource and referral

agencies, food program sponsors, training organizations, network sponsors, and advocacy organizations. From the mailing, CF received 167 returned surveys (22%) from 40 states (*).

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The organizations that responded offer a wide range of services. Most (over 80%) offer training as well as resource and referral. Over half (57.5%)of the groups provide information and referral and 58.7% sponsor the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Approximately 38% of the organizations sponsor a family day care network and have other resources available: toy/equipment lending library, certification, advocacy, resource room, scholarship, loans, toy lending, free diapers, classes, subsidized care information, newsletter, technical assistance, day care start up, association support, and monitoring.

The 167 organizations who responded to the survey provide services to approximately 90,000 family day care providers; almost 4500 of whom are Spanish-speaking (5.0%). This is a significant segment of providers compared with the fact that Hispanics are 9.0% of the population of the United States (US Census). These organizations operate in all areas: rural, suburban, city, small town, state, and county.

The responding organizations reported overwhelmingly that they do indeed have Spanish-speaking populations in their area, and that they are, or plan to provide services to these populations. Of the organizations that responded to the survey, 80.8% have a Spanish-speaking population in their locality, and 70.1% currently serve that population. Five of the groups (3.0%) previously provided services to the Spanish-speaking population but no longer can. A major obstacle

* States with no responses: AR, ID, ME, MS, MO, ND, NE, SD, TN, WV and the District of Columbia.

is loss of funding which forced them to lay off a bilingual counselor or not hire one in the first place.

Several of the groups have attempted to cope with the lack of training materials and other resources in Spanish. Nearly 66% adapted and/or translated a few of their own into Spanish. However, most respondents complained about the lack of materials for Spanish-speaking individuals with a limited English proficiency. A few reported having a bilingual trainer and doing some training in Spanish. A respondent from Arizona aptly noted that there is, "A crying need for translated, cross cultural material in Spanish."

The California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, through their Child Care Initiative Project, developed "El Comienzo" (Getting Started Kit) and "Esto Es Familiar: Una Guia Para Cuidado Infantil Hogareno" (It's A Family Affair: A Guide to Family Day Care In Your Home.) In 1992, these materials were field tested in nine California locations. "El Comienzo" is a collection of resources from a variety of child care experts and is organized into an accessible expandable format. It also includes an empty folder for agencies and providers to include information specific to their local communities. "Esto Es Familiar" is in book format. Although some of the same topics covered in the manual are also covered in the kit, cultural considerations are addressed more in depth in the manual.

Most organizations, however, are working with materials that can only be described as minimal at best, often not more than a parent education or organizational brochure, or CACFP information. In fact 8.5% of the organizations that serve communities do not have ANY materials translated into Spanish. Furthermore, roughly 55% do not have a staff member who is able to fluently communicate with this important population of day care providers and families.

CONCLUSION

Surveys and studies are useless unless they lead to greater understanding and motivate action around an important issue. The survey clearly identified the need for providing services to the growing Spanish-speaking communities. For Spanish-speaking providers with limited English proficiency to be better qualified, they must have access to the same training and information about caring for children as English-speaking providers. Offering training for providers in their "first language" will accomplish this, thus improving the quality of child care for low-income Latino families and children.

Survey repondents stated materials on the following topics should be translated into Spanish:

nutrition
health and safety
child development
licensing
cultural diversity
state regulations
record keeping and taxes
setting up home day care
parent education brochures.

Xuan Sutter wrote in the "Child Care Action News":

> "Women who migrate later in their lives may have difficulty developing job skills or a degree of assimilation sufficient to allow thm to become employed outside the home. Older refugee women often need to develop a job skill that will allow them to contribute to the family income and the community without requiring that they master the English language or overcome transportation and cultural barriers. By becoming child care providers, these women can meet many of their own needs and can provide a valuable service to their communities" (CCAC, 92).

A respondent from Michigan said, "Having Spanish materials available would be a plus for our recruiting efforts." Organizations which recruit and train family day care providers have a difficult time reaching "underground providers".

This problem is magnified with the addition of a language barrier.

The early childhood education community needs to ensure that the family day care materials and training are available in Spanish. CF has begun by translating job-specific materials into Spanish and we challenge other organizations to do the same. We hope this report well be useful to providers, parents, advocates, the media, child care organizations and policy makers as they try to meet the needs of the diverse Latino population caring for children.

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SURVEY OF DAY CARE FOR SPANISH-SPEAKING FAMILIES

We are currently conducting a survey of organizations around the country which support family day care, in order to gather information on the child care provided to Spanish-speaking communities. We are attempting to determine which communities might benefit from our new publication, Mejor Cuidado Infantil: Un Libro Para Proveedoras De Cuidado Para Niños En El Hogar, the Spanish Edition of Better Baby Care: A Book for Family Day Care Providers. Thank you for taking the time to fill out and return this survey to us.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Name of Organization:_____

Address:_____

_____

Person to Contact:_____ # of Staff:_____

Phone Number:_____ Fax Number:_____

1. How many total family day care providers does your organization currently provide services to?_____

2. What services do you offer? (Check all that apply)

_____Resource & Referral _____Information & Referral _____Training
_____Food Program _____FDC Network _____Other: _____

3. Your organization currently operates in: (Check all that apply)

_____rural area _____suburban area _____other: _____
_____small town _____county _____city

4. Is there currently a Spanish speaking population in the area? Yes / No
If yes, size or % of population, if known:_____

-MORE-

5. Do you currently provide services to Spanish-speaking providers? Yes / No
   If yes, how many?_____ .

6. Do you plan to provide services to Spanish-speaking providers in the future?
   Yes / No If yes, when?_____

   In what manner?_____ .

7. Do you currently have materials available in Spanish? Yes / No
   If yes, what?_____

   _____

8. Are these materials that your organization translated and/or adapted?
   Yes / No

9. Do you currently have a staff member fluent in Spanish? Yes / No

10. Have you heard about Mejor Cuidado Infantil: Un Libro Para Proveedoras De Cuidado Para Niños En El Hogar or Better Baby Care: A Book for Family Day Care Providers (Revised)? Yes / No; which one _____

11. Would other FDC publications and fact sheets printed in Spanish be helpful to you? Yes / No
    If yes, what?_____

12. Are you aware of local family day care associations in your area? Y / N
    If yes, please list (association name, contact person, phone number and/or address for each. Use the back of the page if necessary.

    _____

    _____

    _____

13. Any additional Comments:_____

    _____